

Smooth Bromegrass (Ch 6 pg 125-143)

(*Bromus inermis* Leyss.)

Background

- Sod-forming (rhizomatous) cool season perennial grass.
- Two major types: Northern types are grown primarily in Canada and North Dakota, Southern types are grown in most of the U.S.
- Most widely used cool-season grass in North America.
- Best suited for hay and spring pasture.

Agronomy

- Smooth bromegrass can be grown on a variety of soil types, but best on well-drained silt-loam or clay-loam soils with pH between 6.0 and 7.0.
- Spring seeding is recommended because of slow establishment.
- Seed at 16 lbs/acre in pure stands, and 4 to 12 lbs/acre when used in mixtures.
- Weed control must be good during establishment, grassy weeds especially harmful.
- Smooth bromegrass is somewhat tolerant of light grazing during tillering stage, but if cut or grazed during jointing (stem elongation), regrowth is slow because new growth must come from basal buds not yet fully developed.
- Once stem elongation begins, wait to harvest until early heading stage, for quick regrowth and stand persistence of the stand. Generally not tolerant of early 4-cut harvest system with alfalfa.
- Don't delay spring harvest past early bloom stage, forage quality declines rapidly.
- Requires high fertility for good production.

Advantages

- Excellent winter hardiness and persistent.
- Good companion with legumes, especially when cut later.
- Sod-forming, deep rooted, drought tolerant.
- Highly palatable grass even through maturity, a high quality hay and pasture crop

Disadvantages

- Slow to establish, and seed is light and fluffy which makes seeding difficult.
- Less summer regrowth compared to orchardgrass.
- Generally not tolerant of early 4-cut harvest system with alfalfa.

Varieties

- Old varieties: Saratoga, Barton, Baylor, Lincoln.
- Newer varieties: Badger, Peak, York.

Shoot	rolled
Ligule	not prominent with ragged edge
Auricles	Absent or very short
Sheath	sides fused at top; rarely with short hairs
Blade	about 0.5 inch wide, rolled within sheath, "M" constriction midway on blade
Seed head	long panicle, entire head often leans to one side